

44/ 61. (Once Amended) ~~The interlocking ball and socket joint of claim 60, wherein the structure formed in the smooth, concave socket surface further comprises~~

An interlocking ball and socket joint comprising:

5 a coupling member having a radially compressible material formed in a substantially unbroken spherical shape having an uncompressed outer diameter and formed around a relatively rigid core having a projection extending outside of the unconstrained diameter;

10 a socket adapted to accept a mechanical attachment and comprising two or more substantially rigid socket members each having substantially smooth concave surfaces coextending with a portion of the uncompressed outer diameter of the spherical portion of the coupling member, one of the smooth concave surfaces having an indentation formed therein; and

an adjustable clamp mechanically attached to the socket members and subsequently positioning the socket members in a plurality of opposing relationships to one another,

one adjustment of the clamp positioning the socket members in a opposing relationship on either side of the coupling member and relatively rotatable thereto, and

15 another adjustment of the clamp positioning the socket members in a opposing relationship on either side of the coupling member and compressing the radially compressible material thereof, whereby the socket members substantially compress the coupling member and interlock the socket members with the coupling member in a relative angular orientation.

REMARKS

20 Claims 1-61 remain in the case. Claims 1-37, 43, 50 and 59 have been allowed over the prior art. Claims 38-4²₇, 47-49, 52-57 and 60 are cancelled. Claims 44, 51, 58 and 61 are amended.

The Examiner is thanked for allowing claims 1-37, 43, 50 and 59.

Claim Rejections Under 35 USC § 103

25 Claims 38-42, 44-49, 51-57 and 60 were rejected under 35 USC § 103(a) as being obvious over US Patent 180,881 to Howson in view of US Patent 5,441,225 to Hall.

The Applicant believes that the invention recited in claims 38-42, 44-49, 51-57 and 60 are patentable over Howson and Hall, both individually and in combination. However, in the interest